

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
GENERAL MEETINGS FOR SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS
OF THE
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

EXHIBITIONS AND NOTICES.

March 21, 1911.

Dr. S. F. HARMER, M.A., F.R.S., Vice-President,
in the Chair.

THE SECRETARY read the following report on the additions made to the Society's Menagerie during the month of February, 1911:—

The number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of February last was 123. Of these 38 were acquired by presentation, 47 by purchase, 8 were received on deposit, 24 in exchange, and 6 were born in the Gardens.

The number of departures during the same period, by deaths and removals, was 138.

Amongst the additions special attention may be directed to:—

2 Northern Lynxes (*Felis lynx isabellinus*), from Tibet, presented by Capt. D. G. Oliver, on Feb. 17th.

1 Dwarf Mongoose (*Helogale varia*), new to the Collection, from Lamu, presented by the Rev. W. D. Braginton, on Feb. 27th.

1 Black-footed Polecat (*Putorius nigripes*), new to the Collection, from N. America, received in exchange on Feb. 16th.

2 Cat-Bears or Pandas (*Ailuurus fulgens*), from Nepal, purchased on Feb. 20th.

1 European Bison (*Bison bonasus*), from Lithuania, presented

by H.G. The Duke of Bedford, K.G., President of the Society, on Feb. 23rd.

2 Dybowski's Deer (*Cervus hortulorum*), from Manchuria, new to the Collection, presented by Sir Edmund Loder, Bart., F.Z.S., on Feb. 23rd.

1 Aldunati's Finch (*Phrygilus aldunatii*), from Chili, new to the Collection, presented by Miss Phillis True, on Feb. 13th.

1 King Penguin (*Aptenodytes pennanti*), from the Antarctic Seas, presented by Señor Clemente Onelli, on Feb. 11th.

Mr. D. SETH-SMITH, F.Z.S., the Society's Curator of Birds, exhibited a living Hybrid Duck, which was believed to be a cross between the White-eyed Pochard (*Aythya nyroca*) and the Marbled Duck (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*). It was hatched at Scampston Hall, Yorkshire, from a clutch of eggs laid by a Marbled Duck at Lilford Hall, Northamptonshire. The bird displayed the characteristic markings of *Marmaronetta*, but the general colour was dark reddish brown. It had been presented to the Society by Mr. W. H. St. Quintin, F.Z.S.

Mr. R. I. Pockock, F.R.S., F.L.S., F.Z.S., Superintendent of the Gardens, exhibited:—

(1) A pair of Otter cubs about seven weeks old, which were found under a landing-stage at Tewkesbury, and were presented to the Society by Mr. W. Baring Bingham, F.Z.S.

(2) The skin of an adult female Chacma Baboon (*Papio porcarius*) representing an apparently undescribed local race of that species, which he proposed to name and diagnose as follows:—

PAPIO PORCARIUS, subsp. *GRISEIPES* *.

Abstract P. Z. S. 1911, p. 17 (March 28th).

Of the size, general appearance, and coloration of the typical form from Cape Colony, but distinguished by the absence of black hairs from the upper sides of the hands and feet, the extremities of the limbs and tail being clothed with grizzled or annulated hairs.

Loc. of type: Potchefstroom in the Transvaal.

This animal was presented to the Society in 1904 by Mr. James Adams, whose son had brought it from the above-mentioned locality. She was adult at the time and died in 1910. On arrival she was seen to differ in the characters enumerated from the ordinary South African Chacmas, commonly received by the Society, many of which are shipped from Algoa Bay and all of which are believed to come from some part of Cape Colony. This belief is borne out by Mr. W. L. Selater's † description of

* The complete account of this new subspecies appears here, but the name and a preliminary diagnosis were published in the 'Abstract,' No. 93, 1911.—EDITOR.

† 'The Fauna of South Africa: Mammals,' i. p. 14, 1900.

P. porcarius, in which it is stated that "the lower part of the arms and legs [are] darker than the rest of the body, almost black, the upper part of the hands and feet quite black." Since Mr. Sclater further adds that "there are in the South African Museum skins and skulls from the Stellenbosch, Tulbagh, Worcester, Beaufort West, and Albany divisions of the Colony," it may be inferred that his description of the typical form of the species was taken from the material in question.

During its lifetime in the Gardens, the baboon did not show any change in colour, so that there are no grounds for believing that the differences above pointed out are due in any way to age. The Society also possessed at one time a second specimen, an adult male, deposited by the Hon. Walter Rothschild, which exactly resembled the type; but for this, unfortunately, no precise locality was known. The exact northern range in S. Africa of the typical or black-handed Chacma appears to be unknown; but on the evidence supplied by the type specimen of *P. porcarius griseipes*, it may be supposed that the latter supplants the former at least in the Southern Transvaal. Chacmas have been recorded by Mr. Vaughan Kirby from the country between Beira and the Zambesi; and according to Mr. Sclater the species is abundant in Natal and the Transvaal; but it does not appear that any specimens from the latter country have been described or critically examined hitherto.

Text-fig. 145.



Black-footed Polecat (*Putorius nigripes*).

(3) A specimen of the North American Black-footed Polecat (*Putorius nigripes*) (text-fig. 145), recently received in exchange from the Zoological Society of Washington.

The peculiar coloration of this animal, taken in conjunction

with its behaviour in captivity, suggests that it belongs to one of the warningly coloured species of Mustelidæ. Although the upper surface of the head, neck, and body is tinted with buff, owing to the terminal portion of the long hairs being that colour, the whiteness of the underfur, and of the basal portion of the long hairs of these areas, together with that of the sides and under surface of the body and of the greater part of the tail and face, gives the impression of a whitish animal which must be conspicuous against any dark background. Sharply contrasted with the creamy tint of the body is the jet-blackness of the legs and of the tip of the tail; while the whiteness of the face is emphasised by a broad black band stretching across the lower part of the forehead and the base of the nose and involving the bright bead-like eye on each side.

Apart from its coloration, this Polecat exhibits in unmistakable manner that fearlessness which is so marked a feature of protected animals. It never makes any attempt to keep in the background or lie hid, like a savage cat, when disturbed, but comes boldly to the bars of the cage with threatening aspect, as if eager to attack the intruder, uttering every now and again a shrill chattering scream. Its obstinate pertinacity, indeed, in keeping to the front when any human being is in sight makes the opening and shutting of the door of the cage for cleaning and feeding purposes a matter of serious difficulty. Nothing but a bass-broom, which few small mammals will face, has any effect in making it beat a retreat. Finally, when actively interfered with by being netted, it emits the foetid odour so characteristic of species of the genus *Putorius*. The combination of characters here mentioned—namely, the repulsive smell, the courage and fearlessness of exposure, the conspicuous coloration—are all found in the Skunks, the stock examples amongst the Mammalia of protected self-advertisers. Added to these attention-arresting characters is the penetrating scream comparable as a warning signal to the rattling of a Porcupine's tail. These facts justify the placing of the Black-footed Polecat in the category of aposematic Mustelines, an account of which has already been published by the Society*.

(4) The antlers of an old male of the Manchurian Wapiti (*Cervus xanthopygus*), that recently died in the Gardens, to show the natural variation in the position and growth of the second or "bez" tine. In one antler this tine was much smaller than the first or "brow" tine, and was situated nearly midway between it and the third or "trez" tine, apparently as in the specimen of this Deer described by Mr. Lydekker as *C. bedfordi*; but in the other antler the bez-tine was as long as the brow-tine and placed close above it as in normal antlers of the stags of this group.

* R. I. Pocock, P. Z. S. 1909, pp. 944-959.